

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Covenanting Sunday

Lord's Day Worship for
February 4, 2024

*"so much the more also, Jesus has become the guarantee
of a better covenant." - Hebrews 7:22*



“*” = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Hebrews 12:18-24

*Leader: For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire,
and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and
the sound of words which sound was such*

People: That those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.

Leader: For they could not bear the command,

People: If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned.

Leader: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said,

People: I am full of fear and trembling.

Leader: But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God,

People: The heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,

Leader: To the general assembly and church of the firstborn

People: Who are enrolled in heaven,

Leader: And to God, the Judge of all,

People: And to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

Leader: And to Jesus,

People: The mediator of a new covenant,

Leader: And to the sprinkled blood,

People: Which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – Galatians 3:24-29

***Hymn #363** (red hymnal) – “We Gather Together”

Scripture Reading – 1Peter 2:1-10

Ancient Creedal Reading – Nicene Creed (pg#846 in the red hymnal)

Offerings Presented

[Please put your tithe/offering in the plates before or after the service – Thank you!]

*Doxology #731 (red hymnal)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

*Prayer of Dedication

*Sung Psalm #Psalm 1A (see insert below) – “That Man Is Blessed”

Reformation Creedal Reading – Cambridge Platform, 2.6 (1648 A.D.)

Leader: A Congregational church is

People: By the institution of Christ

Leader: A part of the militant-visible-church,

People: Consisting of a company of saints by calling,

Leader: United into one body by a holy covenant,

People: For the public worship of God,

Leader: And the mutual edification of one another,

People: In the fellowship of the Lord Jesus.

Ministry of the Word – Preaching

Prayer of Illumination

*Sermon Text – Exodus 19:3-8

*Gloria Patri #735 (red hymnal)

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.*

Sermon – “Let Us Covenant Together”

A Sermon Calling Trinity Reformed Church to Covenant Together

Trinity Reformed Church Covenants Together

Prayer

Profession of Faith

*Leader: All those members from the old assembly who desire membership in
Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut please stand.*

*Leader: Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of the Triune God,
justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His sovereign
mercy?*

People: I do.

*Leader: Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of
sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as
He is offered in the Gospel?*

People: I do.

(continued . . .)

Leader: Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired and inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

People: I do.

Leader: Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?

People: I do.

Leader: Do you promise to support this church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?

People: I do.

Leader: Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of this church, and promise to study its purity and peace?

People: I do.

Covenant – From Article II (Purpose & Covenant) of the Bylaws of Trinity Reformed Church

Leader: Let us make covenant with God and with each other.

People: We covenant with the Triune Lord, and one with another, to worship our God, disciple each other in His ways, and outreach to this fallen world, all in accordance with God's Holy Word.

Prayer of the Church & Lord's Prayer (sins)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Signing the Book of Membership

Ministry of the Word – The Lord's Supper

Invitation & Warning

Spoken Word – Matthew 26:26-28

Prayer

Partaking of the Bread and then the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***Hymn #345** (red hymnal) – “*Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken*”

***Benediction** – Numbers 6:24-26

All are welcome to join us after church for Coffee Hour.

Announcements

- There are copies of TRC's bylaws in the back.
- If anyone has any suggestions or concerns for this new church, and/or would like to give of their time and/or talents, please see Pastor Doug.

Events

- **New Members Classes:** For those who were not members of the old church there will soon be New Membership Classes. Please see Pastor Doug if you are interested. There will be four classes. If you have not been baptized, please mention this.
- **Tuesday Classics Study:** Augustine's City of God. Every Tuesday from 10:30 AM to noon at Pastor Doug's house.
- **Wednesday Bible Study:** Genesis. Every Wednesday from 6:30 to 8:00 PM at Pastor Doug's house. Baby sitting will be provided by Verna.
- **Saturday Prayer Group:** Gathers on Saturday Mornings for informal prayers and fellowship. All are welcome and prayer participation is optional. The usual location is at the Decker-Gabelmann household. Start time is variable. If you are interested contact Sheryl Gabelmann by phone or text at 860-309-7250 the preceding Friday for start time and directions.
- **YADG:** The Young Adult Discussion Group, i.e. college age adults, will meet on the 1st & 3rd Fridays at Pastor Doug's house at 7:00 PM.
- **Sunday School:** Coming soon!
- **Upcoming Social Events:** A Movie Night.
- If anyone is interested in hosting an event at their house, especially those who live in the farther away regions of the church's membership, please contact Pastor Doug.
- **Snow Policy:** Though we loath to cancel Lord's Day worship, because we are in someone else's building, and Winchester Center is rural and gets more snow, we might have to cancel due to bad weather. If there is a cancellation, I will email and/or call everyone and post it on Facebook, the webpage and Channel #3. With regards to Bible studies, we are much more liberal about cancellation. When in doubt, give Pastor Doug a call: 860-379-1147.

Contact Information

Worship: Every Sunday at 10:00 AM at the Winchester Grange
100 Newfield Rd, Winchester Center, CT 06098

Church's Mailing Address: Trinity Reformed Church; P.O. Box 343; Riverton, CT 06065

Pastor Doug: (860) 379-1147; douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net

Online Resources

Church's Facebook Page: facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/

Church's Webpage: TrinityReformedCT.org (under construction)

Church Youtube Channel: youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT

Pastor Doug's Youtube Channels:

Simply Reformed: youtube.com/simplyreformed

Pilgrims of Plunder: youtube.com/@PilgrimsofPlunder

Liking, Commenting, Sharing
facebook posts and Subscribing,
Liking, Commenting on youtube
helps boost TRC's online
outreach.

Leadership

Teaching & Preaching Elder: Pastor Doug Aldrich
(860-379-1147; douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net)

Ruling Elders: Bob Ensminger
(860-485-8738; robert.ensminger@arthurgrussell.com)
Rich Gabelmann
(860-605-7852; rgabelmann0415@gmail.com)

Deacons: David Mattson (*chair*), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell,
Mason Goodell, Dean Winters

Music Coordinator & Treasurer: Cindy Rines

Clerk: Sheryl Gabelmann

Sunday School: Verna Aldrich, Mason Goodell

Sermon Notes

Exodus 19:3-8

“Let Us Covenant Together”

Covenanting Sunday

February 4, 2024

Introduction

- 1) Today is one of the most important days of our lives: A new church, a covenant community, is being formed, and it should be done with great fear and joy.
- 2) We are assembling, congregating, covenanting together, we trust, by the Lord’s grace.
 - a) Desiring a purified and Reformed church that of “*all that the Lord has spoken we will do!*” - Exodus 19:8
 - b) That we will be the Lord’s own possession, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.
- 3) We believe, for this assembly, the Reformed Tradition, from which our Congregational heritage comes from, is the most biblical of all traditions.
 - a) The main focus of the Reformed Tradition is the “sovereignty of God”.
 - b) As many Reformed theologians have put it, if you had to describe Reformed theology in one word, it would be “*theocentric*” (i.e. God-centric, God focused).
- 4) If you had to choose the second most important theological category for Reformed theology, however, what would it be?
 - a) Covenant Theology would be the best answer.
 - b) That “covenant(s)” is one of the critical ways to understand the Bible and all of life.
- 5) Covenants are clearly a critical theme in the Bible.
 - a) There are covenants with Adam (Hos 6:7), Noah (Gen 6:18; 9:9ff), Abraham (Gen 15:18), Moses (Ex 19:5) and David (2Sam 23:5).
 - i) Especially one thinks of the Covenant of Promise with Abraham in Genesis 15 & 17 (which are critical chapters to understand).
 - ii) And the Covenant of the Law with Moses in our sermon text.
 - iii) Let alone the New Covenant by the Lord Jesus Christ. Jer 31:31; Matt 26:28; 2Cor 3:14
 - b) The word “covenant” is the same as “testament” thus the Old & New Testaments could be called Old & New Covenant.

- 6) The great Protestant statements of faith from Westminster teach the importance of covenants:
- a) As found in the: Presbyterian Westminster Confession of Faith of 1646
Congregational Savoy Declaration of 1658
Second London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689
 - b) Chapter 7, Article 1 - "Of God's Covenant with Man" . . .
"The distance between God and the creature is so great that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have attained the reward of life but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of covenant."
1Sam 2:25; Job 9:32-33; 22:2-3; 35:7-8; Ps 100:2-3; 113:5-6; Is 40:13-17; Luke 17:10; Acts 17:24-25
- 7) As does the greatest statement of Congregational government, the Cambridge Platform of 1648.
- a) In Chapter 2.6 - "*Of the nature of the Catholic Church in General, and in special of a particular visible Church*", defines Congregationalism as:
 - b) "*A Congregational-church is by the institution of Christ a part of the militant (the church in this world as opposed to the church triumphant in heaven) visible (the mixed church we see as opposed to the pure invisible church God sees) church, consisting of a company of Saints by calling, united into one body by a holy covenant, for*
(1) *the public worship of God,*
(2) *and the mutual edification of one another, in the fellowship of the Lord Jesus."*
1Cor 14:28,36; 1:2; 12:27; Ex 19:5-6; Deut 29:1,9,15; Acts 2:42; 1Cor 14:26
- 8) Let us take a look at today's sermon text and the critical covenant found in Exodus 19.

The Mosaic Covenant / The Covenant of the Law - Exodus 19:3-8

- 1) At the beginning of Exodus 19, Israel, led by Moses by God's power, left captivity in Egypt and came to Sinai and "*camped in front of the mountain*" where God will speak to all the people, where the Law, especially the Ten Commandments, will be given in Exodus 20.
- 2) Moses goes to the mountain and God commands him to tell Israel the following things: Ex 19:3f
 - a) To remind them that it is God who delivered them from the Egyptians.
 - i) That God "*bore you on eagles' wings.*" - Ex 19:4
 - ii) With the purpose of bringing Israel to God Himself. Ex 19:4
 - b) That if they will obey God's "*voice and keep My covenant*": Ex 19:5
 - i) Then Israel shall be God's "*own possession among all the peoples.*" Ex 19:5
 - ii) Because why? "*All the earth is*" God's. Ex 19:5
 - c) The outcome of this will be that Israel shall be to God "*a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*" - Ex 19:6
 - d) To emphasis how critical this is, God finishes with: "*These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.*" - Ex 19:6
- 3) Moses returns and summons "*the elders of the people and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him.*" - Ex 19:7b
- 4) "*All the people (not just the elders) answered together and said, 'All that the LORD has spoken we will do!'*" And Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD." - Ex 19:7b

5) This is one of the critical covenants of the Bible.

a) Not just the Covenant of the Law through Moses, which is critical!

b) But, also they continued the fundamental pattern that God has chosen a people to be His people and the Lord will be their God.

Ex 6:7; 19:5; Deut 4:20; 7:6;
2Sam 7:24; John 15:16;
Rom 8:33; Eph 1:4; 2Thes 2:13

Covenant Defined & Explained

1) Standard definition of a “covenant” is “*A mutual consent or agreement of two or more persons, to do or to forbear some act or thing; a contract; stipulation.*” - Webster’s Dictionary, 1828.

a) In our hyper-individualistic age, we don’t think about covenants much.

b) Nor do we like ceremonies.

i) Except for marriage or joining the military.

ii) Both of which are on the rapid decrease in the West.

2) All covenants are on some level a bond, where two or more come together in mutual agreement.

3) This includes covenants where God is one of the parties.

a) Clearly see this in Exodus 19:3-8

b) Literally called “*My covenant*” with Israel in Exodus 19:5.

i) God promises:

- Israel will be God’s “*own possession among all the people*”.
- A Kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

ii) Israel promises:

- Obey God’s voice and do all that the Lord has spoken.
- Thus, will keep God’s covenant.

3) A biblical covenant, where God is involved, however, is beyond a simple covenant.

a) A biblical covenant is: “***A bond in blood sovereignly administered.***”¹

b) It’s still a bond, however blood & sovereignty are also involved.

4) Biblical covenants require **blood**.

a) Covenants with God are never trivial, casual or informal.

b) They deal with the ultimate issues of life, death, eternity, holiness, heaven, hell, creation, justice, etc.

c) Like in a “blood oath”, to break it brings death,

Gen 15:9-18

d) Because of God’s nature there will always be justice.

Rom 3:26

e) In every biblical covenant there is blood.

i) In the Covenant with Abraham there is animal sacrifice.

Gen 15:9-18

ii) So too in Exodus, there will be animal sacrifice.

¹ O. Palmer Robertson, The Christ of the Covenants. (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1980), 4.

iii) Exodus 24:6-8 – “Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and the other half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, ‘All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!’ So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, ‘Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.’”

f) Remember the word for “covenant” is the same as “testament.” Heb 9:16-20

i) A person’s “last will and testament” is really one’s “last will and covenant.”

ii) When does that person’s last will, and action of their covenant, go into effect?
Answer: At their death.

iii) Covenants goes into effect when there is blood.

5) Biblical covenants are **sovereignly administered**.

a) Where most human covenants are bonds mutually agreed too (e.g. marriage)
divine covenants are bonds sovereignly administered by God.

b) The Creator King & Judge does not come begging to His creation to be in covenant with those whom He has chosen.

i) The first use of “covenant” in the Bible, between God and Noah reads: “*But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.*” - Genesis 6:18

ii) Or with Abraham, “*I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly.*” - Genesis 17:2

iii) The formal ceremony of the covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15:8ff, one used in ancient human peace treaties where both parties walk in between the halves of sacrificed animals (saying if I break this covenant I deserve death), only God goes in between the animals because in the end only God can keep a covenant of works.

iv) In our sermon text:

- The Lord simply declares: “*Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant*” – Exodus 19:5

God does not ask.

It is not “*our covenant*” but “*My covenant*”.

- Israel will be “*My own possession.*” – Exodus 19:5

- They are to be “*a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*” “*to Me*”, i.e. God Ex 19:6

v) As the Apostle Paul will write about the New Covenant: “*Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.*” - 2Cor 3:5-6

We Are to Covenant

1) The church, whether in the Old or New Testaments, is by definition a covenant community.

a) First with God.

b) And then with each other in the local assembly.

c) Finally, in a broad a sense, with all other local assemblies who hold to the biblical faith whether on this earth or in heaven.

- 2) As we have read in Exodus 19, and in the Cambridge Platform, we as a local assembly, must make covenant with God, and each other, for:
 - a) First and foremost, for the public worship of God.
 - b) And the mutual edification of one another, in the fellowship of the Lord Jesus.
- 3) Trinity Reformed Church has received manifold blessings all of which are from the Lord.
 - a) Thus we covenant together in fear and trembling, remembering it is the Lord we covenant with.
 - b) But, also with joy and thanksgiving, for His gracious mercies and that we are in a New Covenant.

The New Covenant

- 1) We are in the new Covenant. Jer 31:31; Luke 22:20; 1Cor 11:25; 2Cor 3:6; Heb 8:8,13; 9:15; 12:24
 - a) A "*better covenant*" Heb 7:22; 8:6; 12:24
 - b) Solely because of Christ!
- 2) God has spoken from a mountain.
 - a) What is the promise from the mountain where the Lord Jesus gave the Great Commission?
 - i) Right before His ascension into heaven to reign?
 - ii) "*I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" - Matthew 28:20b
 - b) For we have not come to the Mount Sinai of the Old Covenant, **Heb 12:18-24**
but Mount Zion because of the New!
 - i) Sprinkled clean not by the imperfect blood of animals.
 - ii) But by the perfect blood of Christ. Heb 9:11-25; 10:19-22; 12:24; 1Pet 1:2
- 3) God speaks to us not through a prophet but through His Son, the very John 1:1-5,14,18;
Word of God incarnate who now reigns in heaven, interceding for Rom 8:26-27,24;
us with the Father, and sends us His Spirit. Heb 1:2; 7:25
- 4) Because of Christ, we have been delivered from our sins Rom 3:21-31; 5:9; Gal 3:13-14;
and God's righteous wrath. Heb 2:17; 1John 2:2; 4:10
 - a) Satan has been defeated with the cross! Luke 10:18; John 12:31; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14-15; 1John 3:8
 - b) God bore us on eagle's wings and brought us to Himself.
 - c) The church has been (spiritually) given wings like an eagle so that Satan Rev 12:14-17
cannot destroy us, and though we might be in the wilderness in this Gal 1:4
present evil age, Christ nourishes us, and all of creation is working Eph 5:26-29
against Satan, and for those who are faithful to Christ.
- 5) So that God will bring His people to Himself through His Son.
 - a) Not by our works but through Christ's perfect obedience which is credited
(i.e. imputed) to us by grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Christ alone.²
 - b) Thus, the church is God's own possession among all the peoples Matt 28:19; Luke 24:47
of the earth not just one nation. Rom 3:22; Gal 3:28

² Gen 15:6; Hab 2:4; Matt 16:16-17; Mark 10:52; 16:16; John 1:12-13; 3:16-18; 5:24; 6:28-29; 8:24; Acts 10:43; 13:39; 15:11; 16:31; Rom 1:17; 3:20-28; 4:3-5; 5:1; 10:4-6,9; 11:6; Gal 2:16,21; 3:5-6,11,14,22-25; 5:4; Eph 1:5-8,13; 2:8-9; Phil 3:9; 1Tim 1:16; 2Tim 1:9; Titus 3:5-7; Heb 11:7,38; 12:2; 1Pet 1:5; 1John 5:1,13.

c) And we are to be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. 1Pet 2:5,9-10; Rev 1:6

d) 1Peter 2:5,9-10 – *“you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ . . . But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”*

6) The church must hear, believe and follow the words of Christ.

a) It is the main job of the elders, especially the pastor, *“set before them all the words which the Lord had commanded.”* - Ex 19:7

b) Thus, there are higher standards for those who teach and preach. 1Tim 3:2,9; 4:2;
James 3:1

c) The covenant, however, is among all the people.

“All the people answered together and said, ‘All that the Lord has spoken we will do!’”
- Exodus 19:8

Conclusion

- 1) Let us covenant together and create Trinity Reformed Church.
- 2) Then let us take the covenant meal of the Lord together and rejoice!

Hebrews 12:18-24

- 18 For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,
- 19 and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.
- 20 For they could not bear the command, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned.”
- 21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, “I am full of fear and trembling.”
- 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,
- 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,
- 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.